

1067-264.CB.#330119

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are currently pending in the present application. Initially, the Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 8 and 12-16 contain allowable subject matter if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1-7, 9-11, and 17-21 were rejected in the Office Action dated December 29, 2004. In response, the Applicants have cancelled claims 1 and 9 have rewritten claims 8 and 16 to include the subject matter indicated allowable by the Office Action dated December 29, 2004. In addition, claim 17 was amended to include the allowable subject matter. All dependent claims were amended to depend from one of these independent claims containing allowable subject matter. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and a Notice of Allowability is respectfully requested.

A. Amendment to Claims

Claim 8 was indicated as containing allowable subject matter if rewritten in independent form. Claim 8 has been amended to include all of the features of claim 1 and therefore it is respectfully submitted that claim 8 is in condition for allowance. Claims 2-7 have been amended to depend from claim 8 and are allowable because claim 8 is allowable.

Claim 16 has identical allowable subject matter as indicated by the Office Action in the objection under 37 C.F.R. §1.75. The Applicants have rewritten claim 16 to include all of the features of claim 9 and therefore it is respectfully submitted that claim 16 is in condition for allowance. Claims 10-15 have been amended to depend from claim 16 and are allowable because claim 16 is allowable.

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Claim 17 has been amended to include allowable subject matter as indicated by the Office Action and therefore is allowable over the references of record. Claims 18-21 depend from claim 17 and are allowable because claim 17 is allowable.

B. Claim Objections.

Claim 16 was objected to 37 C.F.R. §1.75 as a substantial duplicate of claim 8. Claim 16 has been amended to include all of the features of claim 9, features clearly different from claim 8 as amended, and therefore the Applicants respectfully submit this objection is now moot.

C. 103 Rejections

Claims 1-7, 9-11 and 17-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over various combinations of U.S. Patent No. 4,787,722 to Claytor (hereinafter the "Claytor reference"); U.S. Patent No. 4,439,021 to Gross (hereinafter the "Gross reference"), U.S. Patent No. 5,138,495 to Shiono et al. (hereinafter the Shiono reference") and U.S. Patent No. 4,007,958 to Peifer et al. (hereinafter the "Peifer reference").

Claims 1 and 9 have been cancelled and the rejection as to these claims is now moot.

Claims 2-7, 10-11, and 17-21 now contain subject matter indicated by the Examiner to be allowable or depend from a claim that contains such subject matter. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit all claims are in condition for allowance.

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D. Conclusion

The Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request they pass to issue. Reconsideration of the present application as amended is respectfully requested. Should it facilitate allowance of the application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted:



Troy J. Cole
Reg. No. 35,102
Woodard, Emhardt, Moriarty,
McNett & Henry LLP
Bank One Center Tower
111 Monument Circle, Suite 3700
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-5137
(317) 634-3456

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